12: Glubb G-3 (1930-1948) 1948 MG1 Jordan
Bedouins 1954

609 marry, but that he required two camels as a present for her father to win his consent. The two camels which I and my servant were riding would be perfectly suitable, he hinted. When we halted for food at midday or in the evening, he would sit down, leaning his elbow on his saddle-bags beside him on the ground, and give his orders. "Hobble that camel, unload that gear." For with all their frank and open manners and their honourable customs, bedouins can be haughty and overbearing when they feel they have the whip-hand. Qasim was a man of limited intelligence, and a venal blackguard.

All the same, he had a sense of humour. Twenty years later, when I was commanding the Arab Legion, Qasim was arrested by the police, doubtless for some heinous crime. "You don't know who I am!" he said when the police came to take him away. "I'm the man who employed Glubb Pasha as a herdsman for my camel!"

361 Altogether it was with satisfaction that one morning we
609 emerged from a narrow valley in the sandy and rocky hills and
712 saw before us the dark green of the palm gardens, the little stone fort and the cluster of houses of the oasis of Kaf. The little fort was owned by Ibn Shaalan and garrisoned by his retainers, under the command of Salih ibn Uthman, a native of the oasis of Jauf. He greeted us with a kindness and consideration which was a pleasant contrast to the company of Qasim ash Shemaam. The latter wished to return next day to his tribe, so I paid him off in the evening. But he shouted that the money was not enough and that he would seize our camels. Salih ibn Uthman intervened, and Qasim was persuaded to leave the room. Outside I could hear a loud altercation and a scuffle. Qasim disappeared during the night, taking with him a selection from our gear—my saddle and water-skin and Trad ibn Shaalan's warm gloves.

712 There was an Arab Legion post at Kaf, outside the village in a fortified camp on top of a steep hill. I paid them a visit and had tea with the officers. The evening was spent with Ibn Shaalan's retainers, sitting on the floor round the open hearth in the castle hall. On the glowing embers were ranged a row of coffee-pots. Outside howled that wind which had seemed to us so dreary as it whistled the stinging sand into our faces in the open desert.